



IN REMEMBERANCE OF ME

A Study on Communion.

R.V.C.D.M.

Ravens Voice Community Discipleship Ministry is designed to be an in home, community focused environment. Where fellow believers are discipled to make disciples. Our goal is to answer Jesus' commission and by doing so, return to a more biblical Christianity.

Ravens Voice Ministries

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The bread that was broken, the blood that we drink:

(Luke 22:19 ASV) And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and gave to them, saying, this is my body, which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

In this verse we find Jesus sharing the bread and wine with his disciples (those who follow him; today this would be all Christians). We call this sharing communion; and it is a very sacred privilege, for by it we share symbolically and more importantly, spiritually in Christ's crucifixion.

I'm sure we've all taken communion many times in our lives, yet I wonder how many of us (myself included) really understand communion's power. How many of us are receiving the full measure of the broken body and shed blood? Do we really even know what we're sharing in when we partake in communion?

Marilyn hickey surmises this problem with the following example, and I quote:

"These kinds of Christians are like the man who scrimped and saved to buy a ticket to America. After he bought his ticket, he only had enough money left to buy a little bread and cheese to eat on the trip. During the long voyage, he gazed longingly into the ships dining room every day, dreaming of feasts fit for a king. Finally the trip came to an end, and as he was disembarking, one of the ship's crew asked him, "Did we offend you? You didn't eat in the dining room with the rest of the passengers". "No," he replied. "I just didn't have enough money to pay for the meals." "Oh I'm sorry," said the ships officer. "Didn't you know that your meals were included in the price of your ticket?"

(Release the power of the blood covenant, Marilyn hickey, 1994)

This is how many of us partake communion; with only a vague idea of what were really doing. Because of this we end up missing out on the fullness of Christ's blessing. Alternately by knowing what we're sharing in we can bring to memory all that Christ has gifted to us. Fulfilling the command to "do this in remembrance of me".

Let's start with what we do know (or possibly take for granted) about communion.

John 6:53-58 ESV So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. (54) Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. (55) For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. (56) Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. (57) As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. (58) This is the bread that came down from heaven, not as The Fathers ate and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever."

Let's break this passage down verse by verse; John 6:53 ESV So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Here we have Jesus declaring that if we do not partake of communion we can have no life in us, this is a reference to our spiritual life and to the fact that we are born spiritually dead, that is we are born with a sinful nature and are dead in our trespasses.

John 6:54 ESV Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. Here we see that communion brings eternal life. By faith we share in Christ's crucifixion and are spiritually resurrected; our old sinful nature being crucified. In addition to this we are given the promise of resurrection upon Christ's return.

John 6:55-56 ESV For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. (56) Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. Take note of the word "abide"; the archaic form of abide means to dwell, which is to inhabit or live in. partaking of communion allows us to "dwell" or "abide" in him and he in us, this becomes a spiritual unity with the savior.

John 6:57-58 ESV As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. (58) This is the bread that came down from heaven, not as The Fathers ate and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever." Here Jesus re-iterates his promise of eternal life to those who believe and by faith partake in communion.

Alternately Christ ushered in a new covenant when he established communion. Let's look at Matthew 26:26-28 ESV Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." (27) And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, (28) for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. This is the covenant of grace, which gives us pardon from our sins, righteousness in Christ and eternal life.

Now when we partake in communion these are the core features we are to remember; yet there are some things we as believers have either not been taught or have neglected regarding communion. If we look at Christ's shedding of blood we will discover there are additional blessings that are ours to claim from communion.

The first shedding of Christ's blood we are going to examine is on the Mount of Olives. Luke 22:39-44 ESV And he came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him. (40) And when he came to the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." (41) And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, (42) saying, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done." (43) And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. (44) And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

The medical term for sweating blood is called "Hematidrosis". This happens only when one is under extreme stress. And in Christ's case, knowing not only that he must be soon to die but also knowing the horrific manner in which this would take place would be stressful indeed.

Looking at verse (42), we find Christ asking The Father to remove the cup from him. Jesus was asking for a way out, an alternative to what must take place. Yet knowing that to do so would not be in keeping with The Father's desire he chose to do The Fathers will over his own. Now jumping ahead to verse (44), we see the agony as his will to live (as expressed in asking the father to remove the cup) fights his choice to do The Fathers will, to the point he shed his blood.

It's this blood shed that we are to remember, it symbolizes Christ's power over the human will. Christ was under such stress that he "broke" his flesh, forcing it to submit to The Fathers will. It was here that by Christ's blood he

bought the ability for us to have authority over our flesh. It was this victory that enables us to plead the blood over ourselves when the flesh would try to rise up and cause us to do that which is not in keeping with The Fathers will.

The bread that was broken was the will of the flesh. The blood that we drink is the power over our flesh. This we would do well to remember when we take communion.

The next shedding of Christ's blood we are going to look at is, the hall of judgment. John 19:2-3 ESV And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. (3) They came up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and struck him with their hands.

As the thorns of the soldiers crown; (which were typically over an inch in length), pierced Jesus scalp he bled. What's interesting here is that the head and the crown represents leadership and authority. When he shed his blood, the blood's attributes were applied to the "head", cleansing it, purifying it, and sanctifying his authority.

What this means for us is this, if Christ shed his blood for us then he shed his blood for us to have authority (in him) in *this life*, in *all endeavors*. In Jesus name and by his blood we have authority over our bodies, our thoughts, over powers and principalities, over demons and curses, over sinful habits and over sickness and disease. We have the blessing of adopting his authority over every circumstance and situation, whatever comes against us, whatever trials we face we have Christ's authority. And because of that authority we have the last word, the final say, and ultimately the victory.

The bread that was broken is the authority of self, the authority of our sinful, fallen flesh and thus sins authority over our lives. The blood that we drink is submission to and adoption of Christ's authority. This we would do well to remember when we take communion.

Moving on, we come to the whipping post. John 19:1 ASV Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.

Here we have Jesus suffering under a scourging. This was being whipped a number of times severely. This wasn't just a whipping that would leave welts or was just across the back, this whipping occurred over the entire body. The brutality of this punishment is evident in the type of whip that was used; for it usually had small pieces of bone or metal affixed to the multiple leather straps. These fragments cut into the flesh, lodging themselves into the victims back and being ripped out with each successive blow, literally ripping the flesh apart. Christ's body was "shredded" for lack of a better word,

If we go to 1 Peter 2:24 we will see the reason why he endured such a horrible punishment for us.

1 Peter 2:24 ASV Who his own self bare our sins in his body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed. It was by his stripes; by his scourging we are healed. The word healed here is the Greek word "iaomai"; which means to heal, cure, restore to bodily health, and to heal spiritually, or to be spiritually healed. By these stripes we are healed from sickness and disease and also spiritually. For Jesus blood to cover his entire body, his entire body had to be broken. It was at the whipping post that our physical healing and spiritual healing was purchased at the cost of his blood. Because Christ allowed sickness, disease and infirmity to be symbolically and literally beat from his body we have the right of healing for others and ourselves.

With the shedding of Christ's blood we have examined so far; we can pray for healing in Jesus name using the authority (over sickness) he purchased for us, to call fourth the benefit of healing which is our right, purchased at the whipping post.

The bread that was broken is the power of sickness and disease to reside in our flesh. The blood that we drink is healing both physically and spiritually. This we would do well to remember when we take communion.

So far we've examined three shedding's of Christ's blood. There are three more I wish to highlight which are, Jesus hands, his feet, and his side.

Starting with Jesus hands. John 20:24-27 ESV Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. (25) So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe." (26) Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." (27) Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe."

Here we have Jesus himself giving testimony (via his wounds) of his resurrection. Allowing Thomas to see and touch his wounds, testifies of the fact of his resurrection and that he was nailed to the cross; hence the piercing of his hands.

The hands represent work, specifically the individual's work. It was by the shedding of his blood that the work of our hands is redeemed. Thinking of this in terms of the Old Testament law for example, we see that our works are futile; every effort we make to save ourselves will ultimately fail. Before Christ's redemption our works were of the flesh; but after he shed his blood our works are "infused" with grace, not that they will somehow save us on their own but they can be of lasting spiritual value. Because of our covenant relationship with God our works can be empowered for use by his kingdom. Now we can do good works (apart from fleshly selfish motives) because they stem from the love for Christ operating within us.

Again it's not our works; but by Christ's working and living within us our works are his, our hands become his hands, our efforts his efforts; we are empowered by his blood to do mighty things toward building the kingdom of God.

The bread that was broken is man's dead fleshly works. The blood that we drink is the empowerment to work unto righteousness. This we would do well to remember when we take communion.

The fifth shedding of Christ's blood that we are going to focus on is Jesus feet pierced. Luke 24:39-40 ASV See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having. (40) And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.

In this verse we have Luke's account of Jesus revealing his resurrected self to the disciples. We know that during the act of crucifixion the crucified have their hands and feet nailed to the cross; in this scripture we have Jesus testifying of this fact by the showing of his wounds.

The feet have some commonality with the hands. Physically the feet bear a slight resemblance to the hands; but our focus is not the physical but the spiritual. And as the hands represented our "works" the feet represent our "walk". The similarity lies in the fact that both (hands and feet) had to be covered by Jesus blood because they symbolized human effort. That is to say the inability of human effort.

Our walk (represented by the feet) is the method by which we travel; it is the manner in which we approach life. By Jesus shedding his blood over the feet he sanctified and purified our walk. We are divinely empowered to walk as Jesus did, by the word in the will of the father. Apart from the blood our walk is carnal, it is flesh based instead of spirit based. Therefore all our attempts toward righteous living will ultimately fail for none can be righteous apart from Christ.

Yet because of Jesus shed blood the way we go about our daily lives (barring sin) is justified before God the father. For we are given the ability to walk in the same manner and method as Christ; this is the effect of Christ's washing our feet with his blood.

The bread that was broken is man's dead fleshly walk. The blood that we drink is the empowerment to walk unto righteousness. We would do well to remember this when we take communion.

The last shedding of Christ blood I want to address is the piercing of Jesus side. I find this to be the most profound act of Jesus on the cross. As this is his last shedding of blood it has finality to it, I find the profoundness in the fact that this shedding of blood took place in death.

John 19:33-34 ESV But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. (34) But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water.

Let's start by taking a look at what the body represents, the body is the residence of the Holy Spirit. It is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Under the Old Testament law, blood was sprinkled on the priest's garments to sanctify themselves (Leviticus 8:10-12 ESV). The priest had to be covered with sacrificial blood to enter the temple, he had to be sanctified or made holy to enter the temple; a holy place. As we are part of the body of Christ, thru his blood we are sanctified. We are spiritually sprinkled and made holy so the Holy Spirit may enter us.

Secondly, the body represents the physical flesh. And Christ symbolically bled for our physical body; that act speaks directly to our healing. Now this does not negate Christ's work at the whipping post, it only serves to amplify it. This reveals to us the continuous nature of healing, for we have the benefit of healing whether Christ is "alive" or "dead". We now have a testament that nothing, not even death may stop Christ's healing power.

Thirdly the body represents the church as a whole. Take another look at John 19:34.

John 19:34 ESV But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. Note the mixing of water with the blood. There are medical reasons for this but what is more significant is the symbolism regarding water. Water represents purity, power, and force. When Christ shed his blood on the cross from a spiritless, lifeless husk he sent the message that "death" did not taint or defile the purity of his blood, nor did "death" reduce or nullify the power of the blood. The water showed his blood to be just as powerful, just as effective "in death" as it is "in life". And it was this mixture that was poured out over His Church giving resurrecting power in Christ as individuals and as a whole.

So we see by this last act, this shedding of blood from a lifeless body covers us physically and spiritually. His blood purifies and cleanses us, preparing a suitable home for his spirit, giving us power over and in spite of death itself. We have been gifted with the power and authority to resurrect "dead" works; such as dead relationships, dead finances, dead circumstances, dead marriages, etc. All by faith in Christ's shed blood.

The bread that was broken was the power of death as a lasting and final end. The blood that we drink is the power to speak resurrecting life into that which is "dead". We would do well to remember this when we take communion.

In closing, we see that there is much more to communion than we may have realized; or at a minimum much we have neglected. It would serve us well to remember all these various attributes of Christ's shed blood.

But if we can only remember one thing, one vital truth it should be this; that Christ shed his blood upon the cross for our sins. He died un-deservedly for the sole purpose of our eternal salvation; reconciling all those who believe unto God. "We would do well to remember this when we take communion".